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SUBJECT: BOLIVIAN CHARGE PLEDGES DIALOGUE, PUSHES "MOTHER
EARTH" DAY

Classified By: Ambassador Alejandro Wolff, for reasons 1.4 (b, d)

11. (C) SUMMARY. Recently arrived Bolivian Charge d'Affaires Pablo Solon Romero paid a courtesy call April 6 on Ambassador Wolff, agreeing to pursue an open and constructive dialogue with USUN on issues of concern and avoiding the temptation to use the UN as a propaganda pulpit. Ambassador Wolff noted that USUN will be a willing partner in legitimate dialogue, and assured Solon that ample opportunities exist for pursuing common interests. Ambassador Solon requested USG support for a Bolivian-drafted UNGA Resolution calling for an "International Day of Mother Earth." In a brief encounter with Ambassador Rice, Solon extended President Morales' greetings to President Obama. End summary.

Emphasizing the Positive

12. (C) Ambassador Pablo Solon Romero, Bolivian Charge d'Affaires since January 2009, paid a courtesy call on USUN Deputy Permanent Representative Wolff April 6. Solon referred to his recent discussion with WHA A/S Shannon, and remarked that bilateral relations were "improving" and moving in a "positive direction." Solon complimented a recent letter from Secretary Clinton, and noted that a "senior" Department official had recently participated in a meeting with the Bolivian Ministry of Planning on assistance projects. Solon said he wanted to open "all channels" to move forward the relationship, and for that reason noted the importance of a good dialogue at the United Nations as well.

13. (C) Ambassador Wolff repeated A/S Shannon's message on the USG desire to put the bilateral relationship on the right track, noting existing irritants such as the treatment of the U.S. Embassy in La Paz and publicized accusations directed at the USG. Wolff noted that Bolivia's alignment with certain UN blocs will put us on opposite sides of some issues, but there are nevertheless opportunities for cooperation as well. He assured Solon that the U.S. would be a serious, open and constructive partner in the UN, and urged Solon to resist temptations to use the UN as a stage for political grandstanding. Solon pledged not to "waste energy" creating friction and to keep problems within "diplomatic channels." He agreed on the benefit of productive dialogue and working toward consensus.

Mother Earth Day

14. (SBU) Solon pointed to the Bolivian-sponsored draft General Assembly resolution calling for an "International Day of Mother Earth" as potentially fertile ground for cooperation with USUN, and sought USG reactions. Solon hoped that the coincidence of the proposed day with "Earth Day" on April 22 would underscore the universality of human concern for the planet's environment, though he was aware that other delegations at the UN voiced some concerns about the title.

Ambassador Wolff thanked Solon for his explanation of Bolivian motivations for the draft resolution. While noting the USG's general skepticism on the utility of international day or year proclamations at the UN, he assured Solon of our shared concern for the environment and complimented the sentiments behind the proposal. Wolff was optimistic that Bolivia would successfully address the concerns of other delegations in which case the USG would not be an obstacle to the draft resolution. Solon was grateful for the positive signal and pledged to inform his capital.

Presidential Greetings

15. (SBU) Upon departure, Solon had a brief encounter with Ambassador Rice, extending President Morales' regards to President Obama and expressing a favorable impression of the new U.S. president. In an aside, Solon noted that, in addition to UN matters, he was closely monitoring preparations for the Summit of the Americas, negotiations in Bonn of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and Bolivia's multilateral efforts to reform the legal status of coca leaves.
Rice